

COAL-MINING.

The output of several classes of coal mined in each inspection district is summarized as follows :—

Class of Coal.	Output of Coal during 1926.				Total Output to the End of 1926.
	Northern District (North Island).	West Coast District (South Island).	Southern District (South Island).	Total.	
Bituminous and sub-bituminous	Tons. 111,918	Tons. 1,084,470	Tons. ..	Tons. 1,196,388	Tons. 39,179,785
Brown	541,931	37,450	326,444	905,825	20,807,277
Lignite	..	256	137,530	137,786	3,972,280
Totals for 1926 ..	653,849	1,122,176	463,974	2,239,999	63,959,342
Totals for 1925 ..	672,403	951,396	491,196	2,114,995	61,719,343

PERSONS EMPLOYED IN OR ABOUT MINES AND STONE-QUARRIES.

The following table shows the number of persons employed in each inspection district during 1926 and 1925 :—

Classification.	Inspection District.			Totals.		
	Northern (North Island).	West Coast (of South Island).	Southern (rest of South Island).	1926.	1925.	Increase or Decrease.
Gold, silver, and tungsten ore	850	490	366	1,706	1,666	Inc 40
Ironstone	..	64	..	64	83	Dec. 19
Sulphur	12	..	..	12	..	Inc. 12
Coal	1,342	2,780	1,037	5,159	4,777	„ 382
Stone-quarries under the Stone-quarries Act	1,608	263	372	2,243	1,972	„ 271
Oil	20	3	..	23	..	„ 23
Totals	3,832	3,600	1,775	9,207	8,498	Inc. 709

MINING AND QUARRY ACCIDENTS.

In metalliferous mines, at which 1,770 men were ordinarily employed, there were three fatal accidents.

At stone-quarries under the Stone-quarries Act, employing 2,243 men, there were three persons killed and eight persons met with serious injuries.

There were 5,159 persons ordinarily employed about the coal-mines, and there were fifteen persons killed and twenty-two persons seriously injured.

It is with sincere regret that I have to record the fact that an explosion or explosions occurred at the Dobson Colliery on the 3rd December, 1926, resulting in the loss of nine lives. As soon as possible after the last body was recovered from the mine a Royal Commission was appointed to investigate and report as to the cause of the disaster, &c. The report of such Commission, which is already known to honourable members, states that the closest investigation has failed to disclose with certainty the origin of the explosion.